

# 603.1, 704, 801.3

## Furniture and Equipment

**CHANGE TYPE:** Modification

**CHANGE SUMMARY:** Furniture, such as office cubicles, reception desks and small bookcases, is exempt from a permit and not intended to be a Level 2 alteration.

**2021 CODE: 603.1 Scope.** Level 2 alterations include the ~~reconfiguration of space~~, the addition or elimination of any door or window, the reconfiguration or extension of any system, or the installation of any additional ~~equipment~~; equipment; and shall apply where the work area is equal to or less than 50 percent of the building area.

**Exception:** The movement or addition of non-fixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counters and partitions not over 5 feet 9 inches (1753mm) in height shall not be considered a Level 2 alteration.

**704.2 Casework.** Addition, alteration or reconfiguration of non-fixed and movable cases, counters, and partitions not over 5 feet 9 inches (1753 mm) in height shall maintain the required means of egress path.

**801.3 System installations.** Requirements related to work area are not applicable where the Level 2 alterations are limited solely to one or more of the following:

1. Mechanical systems, electrical systems, fire protection systems and abatement of hazardous materials.
2. Windows, hardware, operating controls, electrical outlets and signs.
3. Alterations undertaken for the primary purpose of increasing the accessibility of a facility.

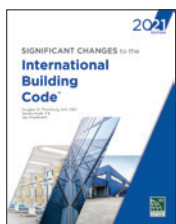


Photo courtesy of T\_A\_P

Typical office cubicle layout.

**CHANGE SIGNIFICANCE:** It has been clarified that the work area has limited applicability and does not include building systems, windows and alterations for the purpose of increasing accessibility. Questions arise in large office spaces with cubicles about whether addition or rearrangement of the cubicles qualifies as a reconfiguration of space, creating a work area. Clarification has occurred by recognizing that cubicle walls are considered furniture when they are no more than 5 feet 9 inches in height, and where they do not create a work area. Additionally, a project can be a Level 2 alteration without an assigned work area. Level 2 alterations, as defined in IEBC Chapter 6, include the addition or extension of any system.

Classification of the work as Level 2 is not deemed appropriate where there is only the movement of furniture, including cubicle walls. Section 603.1 now clarifies that the movement of casework is not considered reconfiguration of a space, and so moving furniture will not be considered a Level 2 alteration. Changes to Section 704.2 focus on the movement of casework that affects any means of egress and may require analysis but does not contribute to the work area size.



This excerpt is taken from *Significant Changes to the International Building Code®*, 2021 Edition. The Significant Changes series takes you directly to the most important changes that impact projects. Key changes are identified then followed by in-depth discussion of how the change affects real-world application. Photos, tables and illustrations are included to further clarify application. Available for the IBC, IRC, IFC, IECC and IPC/IMC/IFGC, the Significant Changes publications are very useful training and review tools for transitioning to a new code edition.